

Local

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NEW JERSEY HERALD

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BRIEFS

Fire, EMS squad hosts breakfast

FREDON — The Fredon Volunteer Fire and EMS Company will host a family-style community breakfast Friday from 5 to 8 p.m. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Soda and water will be included, but the event is B.Y.O.B. The firehouse is located on state Route 94.

Cafe offers holistic health services

ANDOVER — Rose's Grist Mill Cafe, 4A Lenape Road, will present an evening of holistic health, featuring massage by Marguerite Guarisco and handwriting analysis by Debbie Berk, Friday from 7 to 10 p.m. There also will be live music and a photography exhibition. The cost is \$25 for one holistic service, including coffee, or \$40 for two services, including coffee and dessert. Sandwiches, salads, wraps and other treats will be available for purchase.

Call 973-786-6400 for more information and to book holistic services.

Dinner will benefit Sussex resident

SUSSEX — A buffet dinner to benefit Carl Howey Jr., a 27-year-old Sussex Borough resident suffering from end stage renal disease, will be held Saturday from 5 to 10 p.m. at the Sussex Elks Lodge. Anyone wishing to attend should call Terri Coursen at 973-702-7244.

Church to host flea market

BRANCHVILLE — Our Lady Queen of Peace Church will hold its fourth flea market and craft fair of the season to benefit the parish Saturday on the church grounds, 209 Route 206 S., from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a bake sale and food on site.

Vendors are wanted. Spaces are \$20. For information, call 973-948-5752.

Vernon VFW hosts breakfast Sunday

VERNON — VFW Post 8441, located on state Route 94, will host a country breakfast Sunday from 8 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors and \$5 for children.

For more information, call 973-764-9380.

Fire department barbecue Sunday

VERNON — Pochuck Valley Fire Department is hosting a chicken barbecue on Sunday. The cost is a \$12 donation. Take-out will begin at 12:30 p.m.; eat-in starts at 1 p.m. For information, call 201-602-5859 or 973-875-6233.

Coast Guard to inspect boats

HOPATCONG — The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will be giving free vessel examinations at Johnny's Marina from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Aug. 1. Boaters will be awarded a VSC decal upon passing. For more information, visit www.cgauxiliary-lakehopatcong.com or call Vera Reed at 973-827-0313.

Safe boating courses offered

Coast Boating School is conducting a mandatory safe boating course, under New Jersey state law, at the following locations:

- July 27 and 29, Wayne Fire Company No. 1, 6:30-10 p.m. Fee: \$65.
- Aug. 12 and 13, Danforth Inc., Ogdensburg, 6-9:30 p.m. Fee: \$75.
- Aug. 23 and 24, Lake Hopatcong Elks Club, Mt. Arlington, 7-10:30 p.m. Fee: \$65.

For more information or to register, call 877-BOAT-SAFE.

State to review construction complaint

Wantage man accused of violating law by staying in house while work was done

By CHRISTINA TATU
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WANTAGE — Officials from the state Department of Community Affairs are investigating a construction violation filed against Wantage construction official Edward Vander Berg earlier this year.

Vernon construction official Tom Pinand filed the paper work, referred to as a construction violation, on May 3.

It carries a \$1,000 fine and alleges Vander Berg was staying in his Quarry Road home while it was under construction, without first obtaining a certificate of occupancy.

Vander Berg contested the violation with the county construction

board of appeals on May 4.

In his appeal, Vander Berg said the Quarry Road property was not occupied during construction, and the family temporarily was staying in Sussex Borough. The basement level of the home was used as a construction staging area, and a bathroom was installed to replace a portable temporary facility on the property, the appeal said.

To avoid any potential conflict of interest, Pinand has been overseeing the application and inspection process on Vander Berg's property since construction began in 2008.

Pinand said the fact the case has been taken up by the Department of Community Affairs is not unusual because the state investigates any

time a construction violation is filed against a construction official.

Because the construction violation is being investigated, state officials declined to comment.

Vander Berg did not immediately return phone calls seeking comment.

Vander Berg began working as Wantage construction official in 2000, but had worked in various other positions in the township since at least 1990, said Wantage Township Administrator Jim Doherty. Vander Berg plans to retire in September.

Since the violation was filed in May, the township has not heard anything from the Department of Community Affairs, Doherty said.

"The matter under review by NJDCA involves allegations of

actions that may have been taken by Mr. Vander Berg as a private citizen, but not in his capacity as a construction official," Doherty said in a statement.

According to County Board of Election records, Vander Berg has been a Wantage resident since at least 1991 and has lived on Quarry Road since 1996.

Wantage tax assessor Melissa Rockwell said Vander Berg subdivided his property in 2008 to construct the new house. He sold the existing house, which was given a new address, allowing Vander Berg to keep his address the same.

In a Letter to the Editor that was

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Mommy boot camp



Photos by Amy Paterson/New Jersey Herald

Jessica Griffin, of Blairstown, leads the Boot Camp for Moms workout class Wednesday at Lodestar Park in Fredon.

Fitness sessions focus on mothers' goals, offer child care

By LYNDSEY
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FREDON — As the women finished their push-ups, they sprinted 50 meters to another workout station where they performed countless squats with a weighted medicine ball until their fitness instructor told them to move to another station. Large drops of rain fell from the few clouds in the sky, covering Lodestar Park, where the women continued to sweat and breathe heavily. They sighed with relief as the droplets of water cooled their hot muscles.

This is Boot Camp for Moms, a 12-session fitness class designed to better moms' overall health and fitness while providing affordable on-site childcare.

"There were zero fitness options for moms with small kids (in the area)," said Boot Camp for Moms fitness trainer Jessica Griffin.

Two years ago, Griffin, the mother of two baby girls, moved to Blairstown from Sparta and found that it was impossible to locate a fitness center with a childcare facility without driving as long as it took her to work out, or, she discovered that the centers that provided childcare were expensive.

"I found it really frustrating for a mom who thought fitness was such an important thing, so I stopped complaining and said, 'I'll just go out and do it myself,'" said the 34-year old mother.

In May 2009, Griffin became a certified personal trainer and began offering private and small group training to those who desired her enthusiasm, encouragement and expertise.

This summer she created her first class designed specifically for moms, which Griffin said has limitless benefits, including increased health, fitness, energy as well as stronger bones, sharper minds and an improved mood. Griffin also made it a point to have affordable childcare on the premises.

"Where we live in Sussex and Warren counties, you feel very isolated," said Boot Camp participant and



Mary Cay McLaughlin, of Blairstown, left, and Tonya Fleszar, of Hampton, do a medicine ball workout with squats.



Anna Tillinghast, of Hardwick, works on her triceps.

clinical psychologist Michele Peterson, 35, of Blairstown. "Your neighbor could be miles away, so getting moms together gives us a chance to make friends and make relationships, which is also great emotionally."

Each class is a total body workout by applying interval training, a method that combines strength training and cardiovascular training that keeps the heart rate racing throughout the 45- to 60-minute workouts held three days a week.

"Interval training allows you to burn more calories in a shorter period of time and

offers greater benefits," Griffin said. "And when you combine strength training with cardio, you burn your calories up to 36 hours longer than if you just did cardio."

The fitness instructor said she often incorporates kickboxing, Pilates, sport drills, obstacle courses and plyometrics into each ses-

If you want to participate

For more information about upcoming Boot Camp for Moms, contact fitness trainer Jessica Griffin at 973-229-5788 or visit online at www.backtofitness.org. The September sessions will begin Sept. 10 at Lodestar Park, Route 94 in Fredon. Classes meet every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.

An unlimited pass costs \$120; an 8-class pass is \$100 and drop-in costs \$15 per session.

and modifies the intensity of each workout to meet and challenge the fitness level of every mom.

The month-long class began at the beginning of July. The 15 women who signed up are now in their final week of training.

"I've seen the confidence (in the women) changing," Griffin said. "When class first started, some would wear long T-shirts and baggy clothes. Some were on the quiet side and unsure of themselves. Now they're wearing more fitness clothes and asking more questions and holding their shoulders back."

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Sparta school board sued

Former member cites violation of transparency law

By SETH AUGENSTEIN
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SPARTA — A former school board member has sued the current board, claiming its members are illegally circumventing the Open Public Meetings Act.

Paul Johnson, who was on the board for more than a decade before being ousted last year, claims the board is avoiding public participation and scrutiny by violating the state's transparency laws.

"The Board's failure to comply with OPMA requirements has prevented the public and the plaintiff from information, notice and participation in government functions and public meetings," the suit alleges.

An early-morning meeting lasting just two minutes is of particular contention within the lawsuit. The May 20 meeting was scheduled to begin at 7:15 a.m. at the Sparta Middle School, and the agenda featured just one action item: to approve a memorandum of agreement with the secretaries' union for a new contract. The meeting began at 7:40 a.m. and was adjourned at 7:42 a.m., according to the minutes provided on the district's website. Five of the nine members of the board were at the meeting; all voted to approve the memorandum, and all five voted to adjourn the meeting.

Board President Jennifer Dericks, who regularly opposed Johnson as a citizen and then as an elected member on the same board with him for a single year, said she knows the meeting was given proper notice to the public; both the administrators and she are aware of the legal need to follow the transparency laws, she said.

"(We are) very much on top of it," she said.

The lawsuit asks for all minutes, resolutions agendas and records of the May 20 meeting, and asks the court to void the contract decision and force the board to follow the Open Public Meetings Act in the future. However, the two-page suit does not specify particular violations of OPMA — it only states that "action and/or inactions" of the board have violated its requirements.

Johnson is representing himself in the matter, but would not comment further on the meeting in question.

"There's nothing to be said at this time," he said.

Johnson was a part of the six-member majority who regularly opposed Superintendent of Schools Tom Morton, confrontations that resulted in filibusters of public meetings, censure motions and general rancor. Johnson and Morton even accused each other of stalking during a 2008 meeting. However, the six-member majority was ousted over three successive April elections, and was completely swept out by a full board that extended Morton's contract last month.

Johnson was voted out last year.